

Australian Garden HISTORY

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welcome, Tim Entwisle!
a lighthouse garden
Australia in Berlin



Snippets

Managing Honour avenues



The Mortlake avenue of honour of Monterey cypress in August 2018, photo Bernadette Hince

'Three Australian soldiers, WWI'. The photostream 'Named Faces from the Past' suggests that two of the soldiers might be Richard Grenfell and James Henry Grenfell from Tourello, Victoria. photo Flickr



Cover The garden *Cultivated by Fire* by landscape architecture firm Taylor Cullity Lethlean, Australia's contribution to the 2017 International Horticultural Exhibition in Berlin. See Dianne Firth's article on p 16. photo Lena Giovanezzi

The 11th of November 2018 marks a hundred years since the end of World War I. One enduring reminder of our role in the Great War is the avenues of honour in the landscape today. From 1915 on, avenues of honour were planted in and outside Australian towns, especially in Victoria. Many of these avenues are now celebrating centenaries. As forest historian John Dargavel wrote in 2004, 'Like the stone war memorials, the avenues were created by local committees and were not centrally organised. However, the avenues had a much more domestic and personal ambience and were often planted by women or children.'

The earliest were in South Australia's Adelaide Hills: Willunga and Stirling, Mount Lofty. Then Torquay, Ceres (Geelong) and other Victorian towns, spurred on by the Victorian Department of Education encouraging schools to use Arbor Day for plantings each year. In 1916 Laurieton NSW was that state's first, in 1917 Eumundi was Queensland's first and the Hobart Domain Tasmania's first. The best known and Australia's longest avenue of honour is also one of the earliest. It is at Ballarat, which seems to be the epicentre for avenues of honour. The 3801 trees in the 22 km long avenue were planted by 'Lucas girls' from local clothing manufacturers E Lucas and Co, from 1917 onwards. Its trees honour the men and women from Ballarat who enlisted in the Australian Imperial Forces.

Avenues of honour have been planted with various species both exotic and native, and the AGHS list *Avenues of Honour, Memorial and other avenues, Lone Pines – around Australia and in New Zealand* compiled by Stuart Read shows a great diversity (see www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Avenues-of-Honour-sorted-by-states-Feb-18.pdf). At Tourello near Clunes in central Victoria, the choice was walnut (*Juglans regia*). The 36 trees of this avenue have had a small amount of recent funding for rejuvenation.

Mortlake on the Hamilton Highway in western Victoria is home to an avenue of 191 Monterey cypresses (*Cupressus macrocarpa*). Each tree planted in 1919 represented a local enlisted serviceman or woman. It is believed to be the longest avenue of mature Monterey cypresses in Victoria, and makes an arresting site for passers-by, at least it did for the Snipper in August. Many still have brass name plates for those who enlisted. The Mortlake avenue is registered by the Heritage Council of Victoria for its historical, scientific (horticultural), aesthetic, and social significance to the state of Victoria.

With ageing trees, communities are facing decisions on the future of avenues of honour. Some of the cypresses in the Mortlake avenue are suffering from cypress canker, leading to as yet unfinished debate on which species to use in replanting, and how to do so.

In 2017 Moyne Shire council received a petition signed by 134 citizens who believed 'the decision by the shire council ... to replace the aged Monterey cypresses ... with the same species is inappropriate and irresponsible'. But opinions differ considerably. In August 2018 Mortlake RSL president Mervyn Hampson said that branch members were clear on their vision for the avenue of honour. 'We know the bigger, older trees have got to go, but we want like for like planted,' he said 'We don't just have a handful of trees here. This is a significant living memorial.'

The Snipper thanks Stuart Read for his improvements to this Snippet.

Editorial

Bernadette Hince, Editor

Welcomes all round!

It's a joyous time of year, and the busiest time for the Australian Garden History Society. Our annual conference – in Mittagong for 2018 – is about to take place after a solid couple of years of preparation by members of the Southern Highlands conference committee, fearlessly led by Meg Probyn. Every year a remarkably dedicated group of the Society's members presents our annual conference. I know that, like me, many others are profoundly grateful for the effort and skill involved over a prolonged period, and I look forward to the moment of being welcomed to the conference on Friday 26 October.

We also welcome our new Patron, AGHS member Professor Tim Entwisle. Many will already be familiar with his role in the public life of plants and gardens. See AGHS news on p 33 for a little more detail.

Several articles in this issue demonstrate yet again the well established ties between gardens, botany and art – Richard Heathcote's survey of the Garden Museum and the British obsession with gardening, co-curator Anna Jug's piece on a current exhibition in Adelaide of May Gibbs and other Australian women artists, Sandra Pullman's search to identify who made the painting of her childhood home, and which plants were portrayed in the painting.

Dianne Firth tells us of an exciting Australian display garden in Berlin, inspired by Indigenous Australian firestick farming practices. Ros Loftus gives us the story of the restoration of the garden at Riversdale in Goulburn, and Julie Tolley explores some of the realities of gardening for Kangaroo Island's lighthouse keepers.

His interest piqued by visiting St Helena, author Tim Gatehouse writes on the history of Napoleon's garden at Longwood. Anne Vale and Chris Betteridge contribute two extended pieces on books, and our oral history spotlight shines on founding AGHS member Phyl Simons.

And yes, the answer to our July crossword clue riddle ('Efficiency personified in tanned gardener: 10, 5)' was of course Capability Brown, who featured in Jennifer Evans' article in that issue.

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Phyllis Simons



The garden *Cultivated by Fire*, featuring *Eucalyptus gunnii* and *Banksia Baxteri*, photo Lena Giovanezzi



Richard Heathcote

Breadfruit, Bligh and a blinder of a museum

Hatfield House from the East Garden, 2016.
photo Can Pac Swire, Flickr

During May and June each year for the past decade, my wife and I have led tours of houses and gardens in Britain for Australians. I try to reveal in each visit a sense of how the British character is reflected in the gardens and their history. It is after all a national pastime, whether practiced at an allotment, a home garden or a palace, for it is part of the nation's cultural life.

The popularity of television personalities such as Monty Don and Alan Titchmarsh and the programs they make testify to the wide appeal of gardening in Britain, as does the continuing success of the Open Garden Scheme. But this does not answer the question of why the British make and keep such good gardens.

In 2018, we spent a week visiting topnotch 20th century gardens such as Great Dixter, Sissinghurst, Hidcote and Kiftsgate Court, as well as some examples from other centuries — Oxford Botanic Garden (1621), Rousham (the garden's appearance today dates from work begun in the early 1700s) and Sezincote (early 1800s). After this we headed to London for two more exceptional experiences: Kew Gardens and the Chelsea Flower Show. In Britain, flower shows and botanic gardens remain popular whatever their scale, and reflect the public's passion and interest in plants new and old.

The Garden Museum

This year we endeavoured to provide a further explanation to the British ability for garden-making with a visit to the Garden Museum. It followed six hours at the Chelsea Flower Show with its crowds

and circus of horticultural excitements. We needed the restorative qualities of another British tradition – a quiet cup of tea – before considering the calm exhibits of the museum.

The Garden Museum is only a few minutes drive from Chelsea after crossing the river. It sits on the south bank of the Thames next door to Lambeth Palace, the ancient riverside home of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

First established in the 1980s in the decommissioned Anglican parish church St Mary's at Lambeth, the museum recently underwent a multimillion pound refurbishment. (Director Christopher Woodward wrote about the museum's history and redevelopment in 'Captain Bligh's tomb', *Australia Garden History* April 2016 vol 27 no 4.) The changes enabled the Garden Museum to fit much needed facilities into the church and churchyard, including five new galleries that appear magically suspended in and around the original building. In describing the museum's genesis, Woodward observed (in 'The Collection'):

Many Museums begin as a collection looking for a home. This one began as a building in need of a collection. Its raison d'être was the preservation of the great tomb of the Tradescants, erected 1662 and sculpted with images of the gardeners' travels and collecting.

New visitor facilities were also added in a kind of modern cloister as well as innovative landscaping.

Tradescant the Elder

Churches and churchyards are great repositories of history and facts but not all disused churches

can provide a suitable context for establishing a museum. But in the churchyard of St Mary's (their parish church) is the tomb of the Tradescant family: John Tradescant and his eponymous son are central figures in the story of British gardening.

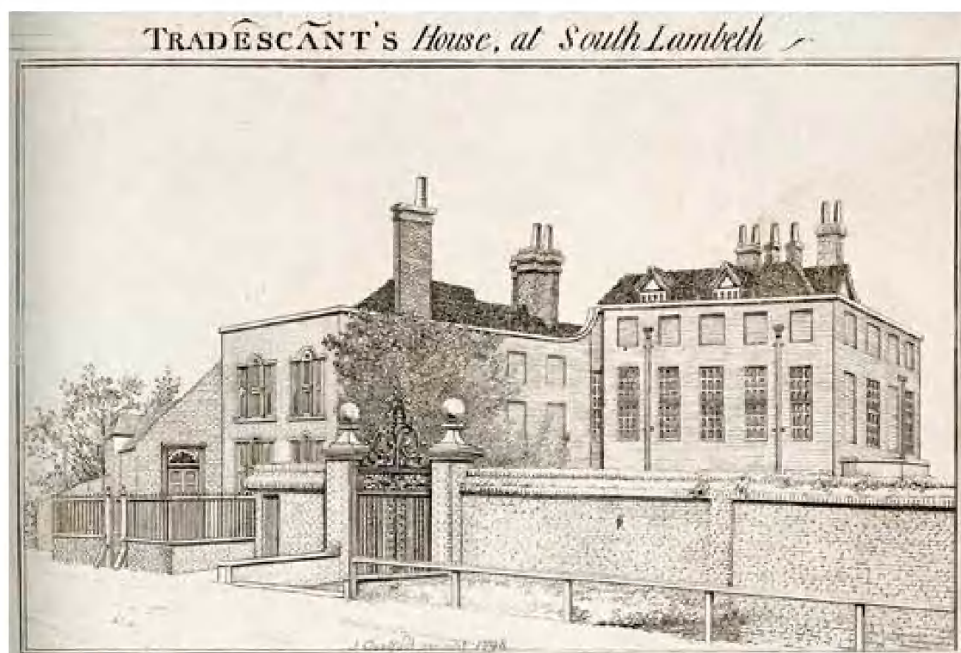
John Tradescant (ca 1580–1638) was a gardener and plant-hunter who founded Britain's first museum open to the public at his house 'The Ark' in Lambeth, then a village to the southwest of London. Tradescant was born sometime in the 1570s, and his life is a mystery until in 1609 he is recorded as a gardener at Hatfield House. This was and remains today the Hertfordshire home of the Cecil family. Sir Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury and the discoverer of the Gunpowder Plot, was minister to James I. In 1611 Cecil sent Tradescant to Holland, Flanders and France and beyond to bring back rare plants, trees, tubers, bulbs and seed for the gardens at Hatfield. This extended shopping spree of Low Countries nurseries is meticulously documented in the accounts Tradescant submitted that are still held in the archives at Hatfield. Tradescant was then involved in transforming the already well stocked gardens using this new material. This work catapulted him into the front ranks of contemporary plantmen, gardeners and botanists although these categories were not then so clearly delineated as they would become.

Keeper of His Majesty's Gardens

After working for a number of other high powered aristocrats a big step up came in 1630 when Charles I and his French wife, Henrietta Maria, appointed Tradescant Keeper of His Majesty's Gardens, Vines and Silkworms at Oatlands,

Left: Line engraving of Tradescant's house at South Lambeth, 1798.

Right: Etching of John Tradescant the Elder by W Hollar, 1656, after E de Critz. Wellcome Collection





Top: Entrance to the Garden Museum, South Lambeth, 2018.
photo Margaret Heathcote

Middle: Looking into the courtyard of the Garden Museum, South Lambeth, 2018.
photo Margaret Heathcote

Bottom left: The tropical breadfruit tree with fruit, Hakahau, Marquesas Islands.
photo Alex Passmore, Flickr

Bottom right: Cedric Morris's painting 'Cabbage', 1956.
Garden Museum, London

in Surrey. At this time he settled his family at South Lambeth and began a nursery to grow and propagate plants, and received visitors eager to see his garden of botanical specimens. Tradescant also collected 'curiosities' natural and manmade. The Ark was intended to represent the nature, art, religions and ways of life of all nations on earth. The collection was added to by his travels to Europe, Algeria and Russia and by gifts from sea captains, botanists and patrons whom he knew, and by his son, also called John (1608–62), who was gardener to King Charles II and travelled to Virginia. The Ark was open to everyone who could pay sixpence.

Today this collection is held in Oxford and was the foundation of what is now the Ashmolean Museum. This came about through Elias Ashmole (1617–92) a lawyer, friend and neighbour of the Tradescants in South Lambeth who published a catalogue on their behalf in 1656 and persuaded the son to bequeath the collection to him. Despite Tradescant the Younger's widow contesting the legacy, the collection travelled up the Thames to Oxford in 1683.

Apart from the sense of history that surrounds this father and son team from the Stuart era when gardening really took off, the museum maps the next 300 years. A thousand objects tell the story of British gardening from the 16th century to the current day. It is a heady mix of people, places and of course tools, implements, documents and artworks revealing style and progress.

Bligh's tomb

There is another monument in the churchyard with a connection to Australian colonial history and a botanical angle. Perhaps the breadfruit decoration on top of tomb might give away that Vice Admiral William Bligh is buried here in the family plot.

He was the fourth Governor of NSW in 1806 until his ousting in 1808 during the Rum Rebellion in Sydney. Not the first rebellion he suffered, as his name is inextricably linked to the mutiny on HMS *Bounty* during its botanical task of transporting breadfruit from Tahiti to the West Indies in 1787. This scheme, advised by Sir Joseph Banks, was to supply breadfruit plants to the West Indies as a food for the plantation slaves. The mutiny put a stop to the first attempt but on the second voyage in 1791–93 a quantity of plants were transported and grown. It was not successful as a food crop, as the slaves declined to eat it. It did become a popular food in Puerto Rico.

Bligh was no stranger to Australia and the southern oceans. At 22 he was selected by Captain James Cook as the sailing master on Cook's third voyage in 1776 to the Pacific, when Cook was killed. Bligh's only other claim to botanical fame is that the ackee, a tropical African tree species which Bligh collected in Jamaica for the Royal Society, is named after him as *Blighia sapida*.

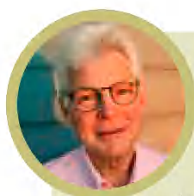
Art in the Garden Museum

Art plays a central part in how the museum tells the story of gardening. An exhibition of the work of Sir Cedric Morris (1889–1982) particularly caught my eye especially as he had lived and gardened at Benton End, Hadleigh, in Suffolk, which we visited on a tour. In 1937 Morris and his partner Arthur Lett Haines set up the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing which operated until the 1960s. The school influenced many artists who came to take the courses and enjoyed the garden Morris and Haines created around their 16th century house on the banks of the River Brett. Morris's work 'Cabbage' painted in 1956 (66.2 x 78.6 cm) is in the museum's collection. The artist and past pupil Maggi Hambling describes it:

When I look at this painting, I enter the unknown territory of an extraordinary cabbage. There is no escape, but I don't want to escape, quite the reverse. I begin an almost treacherous journey – valley deep, mountain high – through the cabbage's endless topography which not only fills the space of the canvas but extends beyond it.

So the museum is using many media to portray and evoke the work of gardeners and their achievements. I found the whole experience stimulating and inspiring. Australian poet Rosemary Dobson's powerful words on museum's came to mind:

*Museums must be the lightening-
Conductors of continuance.*



AGHS chairman **Richard Heathcote** has a deep interest in the social history and interpretation of gardens and gardeners. With his wife Margaret, he regularly leads garden tours of the UK. He has also been involved with the development of the forthcoming Australian Museum of Gardening at Carrick Hill, where he is benefaction director.



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Julie Tolley

Piglets and pelargoniums

Distant view from the sea of the lighthouse at Cape Willoughby, undated photo by Allan C Green..

State Library of Victoria

The allure of lighthouses is well entrenched in the social fabric of many cultures, and is easily seen more recently in Australian novels, children's books and films. However, the romantic idea of living in a lighthouse at a remote and isolated location is very different from the historical reality.

Families who lived at lighthouses, particularly those on islands, could not rely solely on regular supplies of food and goods, and gardens were established which supplemented their diet. There is evidence from diaries, newspapers, books and photographs that at Cape Willoughby on South Australia's Kangaroo Island, gardens were created and maintained from the 1850s for over a century, and fruit and vegetables were cultivated. Flowers were also grown which

provided a contrast to the harsh and often hostile environment, by creating a calm and harmonious sense of familiar domesticity.

Articles in the *South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register* newspaper in 1846 described the difficulties of providing a safe approach for ships to Kangaroo Island in South Australia. It was strongly suggested that building a lighthouse at Cape Willoughby on the island's eastern end would 'caution masters of ships from running along the south coast of Kangaroo Island in the night or in foul weather'.

South Australia's first lighthouse

The first lighthouse to be built in South Australia was on Kangaroo Island in January 1852. It was originally known as 'Sturt's light', and is now Cape Willoughby light. The first head lighthouse



keeper was Mr William Cook Cawthorne who was employed from 1852 to 1862. His wife arrived on the island in March 1852, and their son William Anderson Cawthorne visited them a few months later.

The first houses for the keepers and their families were built in a sheltered position at the foot of a hill; a natural spring nearby provided fresh water. The cottages, however, were several hundred metres from the lighthouse, which meant a long and dangerous walk for the keeper, or for his wife, if he had forgotten his lunch. A photograph taken in 1910 of two men and a bicycle with a cottage in the background indicates the difficulties of the site.

William Anderson Cawthorne kept a personal diary and the detailed entries, published in the *Observer* newspaper, described his daily activities. He visited his father in December 1852 and there are indications that a garden had been established. In addition, there is mention of poultry and wild birds:

Saturday. – Strolled about ... The guanans come boldly and seize a chicken.

Wednesday. – Dined off a Cape Barren goose. Two of these creatures actually alighted near the head lightkeeper's house, and strove to get into the garden.

Thursday. – Shot a fine eagle that had done sundry damage amongst the poultry. Assisted in taking out some potatoes, which grow very fine on Kangaroo Island, as well as all vegetables.

Friday. – As the poor keepers have not regular communication with town, they are frequently very hard up for the want of provision; salt meat of course is the staple article, varied with goat and pork. They were smoking hops for tobacco, and using roast peas for coffee.

Saturday. – Christmas Day – All hands in their best, in honour of the day. Fowls and green peas, and plum pudding.

In addition to the diary entries, there is evidence of gardens and domestic animals. William Anderson Cawthorne was an accomplished artist and had successful exhibitions in Adelaide. Several of his paintings and sketches show not only the surrounding bush, but livestock at the cottages.

Left: The lighthouse; two light keepers stand either side of the entrance, ca 1904. State Library of South Australia PRG 280/1/2/184

Top: Cape Willoughby lighthouse keeper's family cottages, 1911. Photograph displayed at Cape Willoughby. Unknown photographer; courtesy Megan Tutty, Senior Guide, Cape Willoughby, SA Dept Environment, Water and Natural Resources

Bottom: Wood engraving of Cape Willoughby, Kangaroo Island, Port Adelaide, from Walter G Mason's 1857 *Australian picture pleasure book*. National Library of Australia PIC vol 6A S1368 280/1/2/184

Piglets with house and two figures. In the foreground of this view of a substantial house with a walled garden is a sow with four piglets, no doubt a doomed supplement to the salted meat noted by William Anderson Cawthorne.

A man, probably Mr William Cook Cawthorne, is outside the wall, holding a large watering can and what looks to be a hoe.

Mrs Cawthorne stands behind the gate, which suggests that she is responsible for the garden. In the distance is the lighthouse, and a figure who is probably the assistant keeper.

Sketch by William Anderson Cawthorne
State Library of South Australia PRG 489-9-9



Early advice for South Australian gardeners

By the 1850s, locally written books and newspapers included information about gardening for the householder. One of the first local books about gardening, *The South Australian vigneron and gardeners' manual*, written by George McEwin in 1843, contained facts about the cultivation of fruit and vegetables and soil preparation.

In 1850, Daniel Bunce had published the *Australian manual of horticulture* which contained good practical advice and hints on plants for the kitchen garden, orchard and flower garden.

Almanacs, seed catalogues and garden guides were readily available and householders were keen to learn about the climate and growing conditions for plants.

The *Farm and garden guide* was published every month from 1858 to 1863. Articles encouraged women to consider gardening, which was considered a suitably appropriate genteel activity:

The cultivation of flowers, whether in the garden, the greenhouse, or the window, is one of the most elegant and truly feminine amusements [in] which a lady can engage. One of our objects is to promote a taste for gardening among the ladies.

Suggestions for flowers included fuchsias, geraniums, petunias and verbenas. In the kitchen garden turnips, carrots, herbs, potatoes and lettuces could be planted. Loquats, strawberries, gooseberries, apples and rhubarb were some of the fruit suggested.

Local suppliers

South Australian seed merchants and nursery firms were well established by the 1850s and newspaper notices appeared frequently for fruit tree and seed catalogues, including those offered by Mr Charles Giles of Grove Hill and Mr Bailey at Hackney.

It is likely Mrs Cawthorne used these to source plants for her garden at Cape Willoughby, as well as the tradition of taking cuttings from friends.

Notices in the *South Australian Register* and the *Adelaide Observer* newspapers advertised sales of fruit trees, including apple, pear and plum, as well as shrubs and bulbs.

Mr C Marryat, a clergyman, visited Cape Willoughby and published a report in the *Church Chronicle* in March 1863:

Walked through the scrub ... about five miles to the lighthouse on Cape Willoughby. The keepers' cottages, three in number, are good and comfortable. The land in the neighbourhood is good and admits of gardening. One keeper has fenced in about three acres, and has had fair crops.



Advertisements in the *Kangaroo Island Courier* for Murray's store at Kingscote advertised drapery, fruit trees and seed potatoes. PG Warren urged readers to order young fruit trees. Mr J Davidge sold an assortment of ironmongery, including spades, forks and hoes. All these suggest a keen and knowledgeable interest in horticulture and gardening by the residents of the island.

Mr George Angus was the head lighthouse keeper at Cape Willoughby from 1903 to 1912. A photograph taken in 1911 of him and his family standing at the house reveals a little about the flowers in the garden. There is a small white picket fence in the foreground and a great deal of ground cover which is growing up the fence. A large arum lily plant and possibly geraniums are the focal point of the photograph. To the side, a young man, probably the son, looks down wistfully at a flower he has just picked and holds in his hand. There are many plants on the fence which may be climbing geraniums.

In 1915 Edward Samuel Payne was living at Cape Willoughby, and a photograph taken from the same location in the 1900s of several cottages clearly shows a garden which has been carefully tended over many years. The fruit trees have thrived and the fenced garden at the front of the house indicates a strong sense of pride and care.

In 1927 new houses were constructed next to the lighthouse, replacing the original cottages which had been built in a sheltered position at the foot of a hill, but several hundred metres from the lighthouse. Salt spray and wind made gardening difficult and water had to be carted up the hill from the location of the original cottages.

In 1929 the *Kangaroo Island Courier* reported that 'a fine wall has been erected at

Cape Willoughby round the three new cottages on the top of the hill. It was decided to build a stone wall ... and without a doubt prove a great shelter to bad weather, being 5 ft. 6 in. high.' By December 1938, ten years later, a photograph of three houses shows very little evidence of either the wall or any gardens.

During World War 2, national security legislation made it illegal to take or publish photographs, sketches or plans of wireless, signal or cable stations. As a result, there are very few photographs of the lighthouse during those years. However, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the lighthouse keepers and his families at Cape Willoughby grew a variety of vegetables and flowers to improve not only their diet, but their surroundings.

Anne Chittleborough, Gillian Dooley, Brenda Glover and Rick Hosking, eds (2002) *Alas, for the pelicans! Flinders, Baudin & beyond*. Wakefield Press, Adelaide.

JS Cumpston (1986) *Kangaroo Island 1800–1836*. Roebuck.

Rebe Taylor (2002) *Unearthed: the Aboriginal Tasmanians of Kangaroo Island*. Wakefield Press, Adelaide.

Trove (www.trove.nla.gov.au) National Library of Australia search facility for books, images, newspapers, maps, music, archives, etc.

Dr Julie Holbrook Tolley is an avid social historian and public speaker. She is published frequently and recently spoke to the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide about an early colonial gardener who was related to a man shot by his own camel. Dr Tolley is currently researching the gardens of the World War II internment camps in the Riverland, South Australia.



Left: Tower and cottages, looking east at Cape Willoughby, 21 December 1938. photo Dorothy Vernon Smith

State Library of South Australia PRG 1642/29/385

Right: Photograph by an unknown photographer of the lighthouse cottages at Cape Willoughby in 1911 shows an extensive and well established garden at one of the houses. Many large fully developed fruit trees have been planted around the perimeter; no doubt for easy watering. In an adjacent paddock a keeper identified as GA Payne stands watching his wife grooming a horse.

State Library of South Australia PRG 280/1/44/22



Anna Jug

Close to nature: May Gibbs and Australian botanical artists

The Little Studio, Neutral Bay, 1919, Collection of North Sydney Heritage Centre, Stanton Library

In 19th century Europe, the work of Belgian-born French artist Pierre-Joseph Redouté (known as the Raphael of flower painting) and monumental publishing projects such as *The Temple of Flora* by the English physician and botanist Dr Robert Thornton exemplified the success of the art of botanical illustration. While traditionally in Europe botanical art was a male-dominated field, it was largely country based gentlewomen who took up the cause in 19th century Australia.

To Australia's 18th and 19th century settlers, the grey-green colour of a new country with its undisciplined gum trees and unfamiliar plants was so very different from 'home'; it was wild, threatening and unknown. Slowly a genuine appreciation of the unique Australian bush emerged, and with it a desire in some to protect and preserve the unique flora and fauna that was rapidly disappearing around expanding settlements.

A female-led movement

Among the early bush conservationists were women who collected and drew plant specimens

for botanists such as Ferdinand von Mueller. These artists produced botanical illustrations that contributed to an understanding of Australian botany while creating something of supreme beauty, inspired by the plants themselves.

Fanny de Mole

One of the women artists was Fanny de Mole (1835–66), who produced her only book at 26 years old. Her stated aim was to depict ‘the flowers with which we daily meet in our own grounds and neighbourhood, and with which we would gladly make our friends in England familiar’.¹ While production details are not fully known, it is believed that Fanny sent completed line drawings to London for printing, and that the lithographed plates were returned to Australia to be hand-coloured by Fanny and other members of her family. *The wildflowers of South Australia* (London 1861), an edition of about 100 copies and 20 plates, was the first book to illustrate the flora of the colony.



Fanny De Mole, *Swainsona Formosa* (Sturt Desert Pea) from *The Wildflowers of South Australia*, 1861.

Ellis Rowan

One of Australia’s most adventurous botanical artists was Marian Ellis Rowan (1848–1922). Untrained but enthusiastic, her work crossed the boundaries between art and scientific illustration. Her studies of flowers were often set in their environment, and worked in an impressionist style. Ellis became obsessive about her work and finding new subjects. Occasionally this took her into environments which were both difficult to get to and dangerous. Her working conditions in Western Australia and North Queensland were difficult; in New Guinea they were worse. In an 1887 letter from Queensland she wrote:

My love for the flora of Australia, at once so unique and so fascinating, together with my desire to complete my collection of floral paintings, has carried me into other colonies, Queensland and some of the remotest parts of the great Continent of Australia. The excitement of seeking and the delight of finding rare or even unknown specimens abundantly compensated me for all difficulties, fatigue and hardships.



Ellis Rowan, *Banksia Grandis*, Willdenow (Proteaceae), watercolour and gouache, 1890. This was painted in Western Australia the same year May exhibited beside Rowan.

Rosa Fiveash

Rosa Fiveash (1854–1938) was born in Adelaide and became a noted painter of Australian wildflowers, dedicating her life to illustrating the flora of South Australia. She studied at the Adelaide Art School under Louis Tannert and HP Gill but taught herself the art of botanical illustration. From 1882 Fiveash was commissioned by the Government Conservator of Forests to illustrate the nine-part *Forest flora of South Australia*.

The five prints per issue were expertly prepared for lithography by the South Australian Government lithographer Harcourt Barrett. Fiveash also painted illuminated addresses and is credited with introducing china painting to Adelaide.²

It is into this long history that artists such as May Gibbs and her contemporaries strode. Their love of nature in general, and the Australian bush in particular, led them to create beautiful, but scientifically accurate works of art.

Left: Rosa Fiveash,
Eucalyptus Pyriformis, from
 Forest flora of South
 Australia, 1882, Collection
 of Urrbrae House,
 University of Adelaide



Right: May Gibbs
'Eucalyptus Ficifolia
 (Red flowering gum)',
 1902. Watercolour on
 cardboard
 State Art Collection,
 Art Gallery of Western
 Australia, purchased 1975
 photo Bo Wong



Australian children's literature

Early white settlers to Australia brought their own traditional myths and fairy stories with them—their northern hemisphere landscapes were filled with dark, often snow-covered English and European forests containing wild bears and wolves, deer and fanciful toadstools. Meadows were scattered with willowy grasses and delicate wildflowers.

When the first Australian fantasy books for children began to appear towards the end of the 19th century, native animals such as kangaroos and koalas often mingled with familiar rabbits and pretty plants were transformed into flower fairies. Ethel Turner's *Seven little Australians* (1894) is often cited as the first book written by an Australian for Australian children, but while its theme was Australian, its presentation was rather uninspiring.

In England, authors such as Beatrix Potter and Kenneth Grahame were producing books in much more engaging formats. Similarly, writers and artists in Australia began to create their own unique responses to the plants and animals that surrounded them—now familiar names such as Norman Lindsay (1879–1968), Ida Rentoul Outhwaite (1888–1960), Pixie O'Harris (1903–1991) and May Gibbs (1877–1969).

May Gibbs' characters were creatures of the Australian landscape; clothed in eucalyptus blossom, with lizards as friends and 'Banksia men' as enemies. Her iconic bush imagery for young readers

was both imaginative and botanically accurate, and offered a precedent for bringing Australian flora and fauna to life in a new visual style.

'The other fairytale': the life of May Gibbs

Although May pioneered the Australian fairy tale, her artist parents Herbert William Gibbs and Cecilia May Rogers spent the first years of May's life in Surrey, until emigrating to South Australia in 1881.

Her father and his brother George attempted to establish a farm near Wallaroo. It failed almost immediately, and the family settled in Adelaide's Norwood. May was educated at home and recalled, 'I loved drawing, so my father started me right off, because he was a clever artist'.

In 1885 the brothers invested in a Western Australian homestead, 'The Harvey'. May recalled the two years the family lived there as 'the happiest in my life'. She had a small pony, which enabled her to explore the countryside and experience the local flora and fauna, discovering many of the wild flowers and plants that inspired so many of her characters.

After two years Herbert found work in Perth, where he began teaching his daughter watercolours and then oils. From her early years she experimented with theatre, music, poetry and literature, and was heavily influenced by the British children's illustrator Randolph Caldecott (1846–86).



In Western Australia May had the opportunity to see the work of Australia's most famous female Australian botanical artist, the internationally recognised Ellis Rowan. In 1889, Rowan had travelled to Western Australia to seek out new plant species to draw and collect, and to exhibit her work in Perth. Her fearless spirit and artistic prowess must have left a significant impression on May, because the very next year Gibbs's work would hang beside hers in a Perth show. May Gibbs was then only 13 years old. Within a decade she had left for London to study art.

Gibbs travelled between Perth and London several times within the next decade, finding success publishing satirical columns under the pseudonym 'Blob'. In the first years of the 20th century she became interested in children's illustration, and began experimenting with fairy tales set in an Australian bush setting.



Left: May Gibbs (Australia, 1877–1969) 'West Australian orchids', 1903, Western Australia. Watercolour on tone paper.

Collection of the State Library of New South Wales, Sydney

Right: We are the Gumnut Corps.

Collection of the State Library of South Australia

Over the war years following 1914, May created a series of 30 postcards full of iconic imagery reminding soldiers of home. They were included in Red Cross parcels sent to soldiers on the front line. May Gibbs' bush babies traversed the world amongst woolly socks and biscuits, with a message to heighten spirits:

*We are the Gumnut Corps
We're going to the War
(We'll make things hum, by gum!)*

Gibbs' love of Australian plants and animals underlay her ability to see tiny boats in native seedpods, and to portray these in a botanically accurate way, yet so delightfully that her books have inspired in many a love of Australia's flora.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the lenders for allowing reproduction of their collection items, as well as the copyright holders for May Gibbs, Northcott and the Cerebral Palsy Alliance.

Close to Nature: May Gibbs and Australian Botanical Art

Exhibition on display at Adelaide's Carrick Hill until 25 November 2018

- 1 Des Cowley (2002) Women's work: illustrating the natural wonders of the Colonies. *La Trobe Journal* no 69.
- 2 Jennifer Phipps (1986) *Artists' gardens – flowers and gardens in Australian art 1780s–1980s*. Bay Books, Sydney.

Anna Jug is an art historian and the associate curator at Carrick Hill historic house and gardens in Adelaide, South Australia. She is co-curator of the exhibition *Close to Nature: May Gibbs and Australian Botanical Art* and author of the accompanying exhibition catalogue.





Dianne Firth

An Australian garden in Berlin

Aerial view of Taylor Cullity Lethlean's garden *Cultivated by Fire*, Australia's contribution to the 2017 International Horticultural Exhibition (Internationale Gartenausstellung) in Berlin.

photo Britta Pedersen/dpa-Zentralbild/dpa

At intervals generally of 10 years, the International Horticultural Exhibition (Internationale Gartenausstellung) takes place in Germany. In 2017 it was held in Berlin, on the theme 'An Ocean of Colours'. The garden *Cultivated by Fire* by landscape architecture firm Taylor Cullity Lethlean was Australia's contribution to the 2017 exhibition. An estimated 1.6 million visitors saw the exhibition between 13 April and 15 October 2017. *Cultivated by Fire* is now part of the permanent collection of Gardens of the World, Gärten der Welt, located in Marzhan-Hellersdorf in northeastern Berlin.

Kate Cullity, one of the directors of Taylor Cullity Lethlean, visited Berlin twice during the creation of the garden, once in 2015 to present the design and again for the opening in 2017. On both occasions she met with other landscape architects and government representatives to highlight the quality of Australian landscape architecture practice.

The 2017 project took several years to complete. In the beginning nine leading landscape architects and designers from around the world — Australia, the UK, Lebanon, Thailand, China, Germany,

Brazil, Chile and South Africa — were invited to create gardens that showcased the cultural landscape of their home countries. Each was allocated a garden plot measuring 380 square metres that would become a garden room or garden cabinet when surrounded by a clipped hornbeam hedge.

The design for *Cultivated by Fire* continued Taylor Cullity Lethlean's ongoing fascination, exploration and abstraction of the Australian culture and the creative power of fire. It considered the sophisticated Aboriginal land management practice of selective low-intensity burning known as firestick farming or fire mosaics. This method of land management serves many purposes for Aboriginal people. They include reducing the risk of larger and more unpredictable bushfires, creating open country ideal for hunting grazing marsupials, flushing out animals during burning, and increasing fertile new growth that provides an abundance of edible plants for both wildlife and humans.

Taylor Cullity Lethlean writes:

The *Cultivated by Fire* garden distils and abstracts the fire-stick farming practice to create a mosaic garden composed of elements reminiscent of both the burnt and rejuvenated Australian landscape. These elements include actual fire, charred poles and clipped branches, *Eucalyptus* and *Acacia* seedlings,

floriferous garden beds of Australian native plants and a walkable orange ground plane of crushed red brick that is reminiscent of the fiery sands of the central Australian desert.

Taylor Cullity Lethlean also noted that creating a garden in Europe with a vastly different climate to Australia had its challenges. The firm resolved this dilemma by working closely through the planning, management and monitoring of construction works with the client, International Garden Exhibition Berlin, and the German landscape architecture consultants K+L. Unique solutions needed to be developed for working in this climate, such as designing an underground heating system for the garden's eucalypts. Substitute plant species were considered, particularly grasses that were aesthetically similar to Australian grasses, and Taylor Cullity Lethlean provided advice and assistance in sourcing plants and seeds for propagation.

Within the visitor centre Taylor Cullity Lethlean has provided background information and a video that expands on Australian Aboriginal firestick culture and its inspiration for the creation of *Cultivated by Fire*. The garden is ideally located near the visitor centre with charred tree trunks standing visible above the neatly clipped surrounding hedge, inviting the curious visitor into a different realm of experience. Not only does Taylor Cullity Lethlean's garden create an interesting and visually stimulating garden cabinet, it helps foster an understanding of Australia's rich cultural and environmental history as interpreted through contemporary garden art. The project received wide publicity internationally. In the London *Telegraph* Tom Stuart-Smith (26 August 2017) wrote:

It (the garden) is colourful, dense with all sorts of references to Australia's Indigenous landscapes and traditions ... With black charred poles, lots of red earth and eucalypt seedlings, it's a great show garden and I came out the other end knowing more about aboriginal culture than I did from six months consorting with sheep and kangaroos in the outback aged 18.

Garden exhibitions often have a short life and are dismantled afterwards. Not so in Berlin, where the opportunity was taken to use the tourist attraction of the 2017 exhibition to expand green spaces in the city in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. Already one of the greenest cities in Europe, Berlin has a long tradition of park and garden design. Many of its parklands created by the 19th century landscape architect Peter Joseph Lenné are recognised as part of the UNESCO World Heritage.

Now, under the state-owned Grün Berlin Group, Berlin is carrying forward this landscape legacy through the development, realisation and operation of complex open-space projects with a focus on social and environmental sustainability, as well as creating a large number of parks of major tourist interest in the capital. The 2017 International Horticultural Exhibition was not only an international garden exhibition with tourism interests, it has become one of the city's most important urban development projects of the decade.

Before unification the district was part of the degraded Wuhletal Valley in East Germany and home to one of the largest housing estates in Europe. The area had been chosen to celebrate the city of Berlin's 750th anniversary in 1987 with a horticultural exposition, the *Berliner Gartenschau*. This became the seed to help start the process of environmental repair for the district. Following German reunification the exposition site was developed as the Gardens of the World. In 2000 the Chinese garden was opened followed by other gardens, including Japanese (2003), Balinese (2003), Oriental (2005), Korean (2006), and Italian (2008), as well as gardens modelled after other European styles.

The 104 hectares of the 2017 exhibition site took the original 43 hectares of the Gardens of the World and developed new sections including an enlarged Gardens of the World, the Wuhletal Valley, and Kienberg Park incorporating Kienberg Hill and the Kienberg Promenade to link the surrounding Marzahn and Hellersdorf residential estates.

The vast complex can be appreciated by a ride on the cable way which stretches 1.5 km across the site. It provides access from a new railway station to the top of the 110 metre high hilltop of the Kienberg, then across the new 60 hectare Kienbergpark showcasing the restored unique nature of the Wuhletal Valley, to the entrance of the manicured Gardens of the World. The cable way and hilltop stop provide expansive views over the whole park system, the surrounding housing estates and to central Berlin in the distance.

Within this complex the Gardens of the World has become an international showcase for the diversity, beauty and transformative power of contemporary garden and landscape architecture. *Cultivated by Fire* sits as an iconic Australian garden within it.

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Tim Gatehouse

A formal French garden on a South Atlantic island

Longwood House, last residence of Napoleon Bonaparte during his exile on St Helena (1815–21).

photo Tim Gatehouse

It comes as a surprise to find a formal French garden on an island in the South Atlantic Ocean, but such a garden surrounds Longwood House, Napoleon Bonaparte's residence in exile on the remote South Atlantic island of St Helena. He lived here from 1815 until his death in May 1821, although the garden was only created in the last two years of his life.

Though small (17 by 11 km), St Helena encompasses a varied topography and vegetation. Rising to 800 metres above sea level, the lushly wooded mountain peaks and valleys are surrounded by an arid windy plateau on which Longwood stands at an altitude of 500 metres. The plateau is surrounded by precipitous cliffs which plunge straight into the sea.

Before Napoleon's arrival Longwood had been the country residence of the Lieutenant Governor of the island. The surrounding land had been an experimental farm established by governor Alexander Beatson to ascertain crops and trees best suited to the island's climate, in an attempt to reverse environmental damage caused by uncontrolled exploitation of its resources. Colonel Skelton, the previous occupant, had planted a small garden which had not flourished due to the shortage of water and the constant southeast trade winds which blow without obstruction across the plateau.

Establishment of the garden

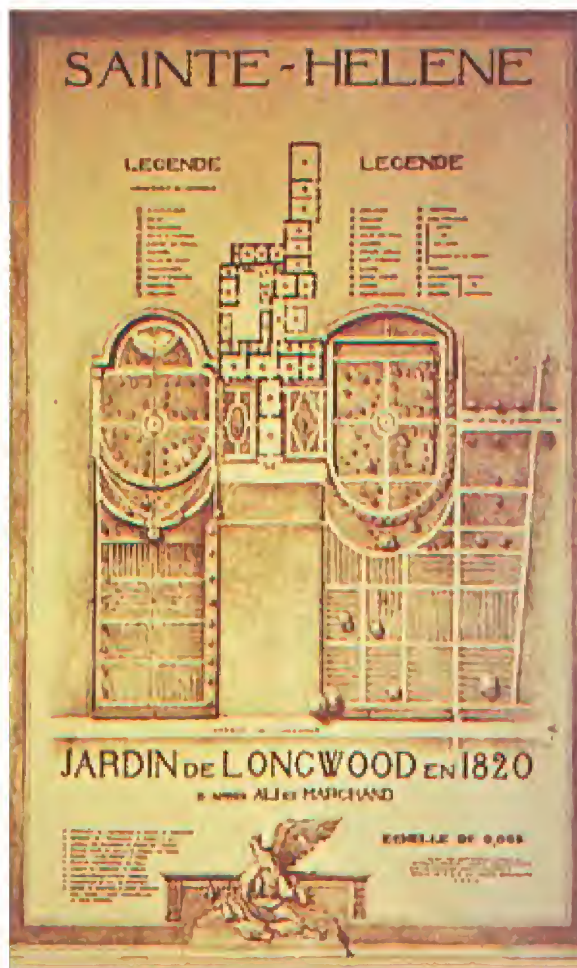
Napoleon would not have been the first person to take to gardening as therapy for unhappiness. That he did not do so until November 1819 when he had already been on the island for four years

was probably due to his growing reclusiveness caused by the constant surveillance to which he was subjected by the British authorities and the intrusions of inquisitive visitors.

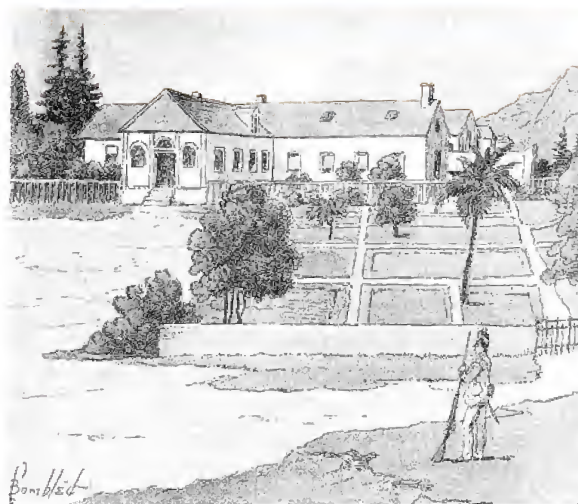
At the suggestion of his doctors, who were concerned by Napoleon's deteriorating health caused to a large degree by lack of exercise, he turned to the garden as his private refuge. He had done so before. At the military college at Brienne, where each cadet had been given a garden plot to cultivate, Napoleon had enclosed his in a wall and hedge. Here he could escape the barbs leveled at him as a Corsican foreigner by his fellow cadets. During his years of power, his happiest times were spent at Malmaison, the retreat outside Paris where Empress Josephine created her world-famous garden. Here he could enjoy as much privacy as was possible for someone in his position. On the island of Elba, his first place of exile, the small walled garden at his residence the Villa dei Mulini had also been a source of solace.

As much as he enjoyed the seclusion of Malmaison, Napoleon did not favour the naturalistic style of the garden Josephine created there, parts of which closely resembled those designed by Capability Brown in England. He preferred the traditional French formal gardens of the type which surrounded the French royal palaces. These in part were an expression of the power of the monarchy, and the miniature version covering one hectare which he created at Longwood may have been a reminder of his former grandeur. Perhaps its symmetry and order also appealed to his military mind. Regardless of the reason, his approach to the garden's creation was carried out with military precision.

Napoleon was not only responsible for the design, but was also a hands-on gardener. The gardening day commenced at sunrise when the sentries withdrew to the outer perimeters of the estate. The male members of his entourage were dragooned as helpers, although manual work was clearly not their preferred pastime. Chinese labourers were employed for the large-scale work of building the grotto and excavating the circular fish pond and cascade. They also excavated the paths to a depth of two feet below the level of the garden beds to further ensure Napoleon's privacy. Occasionally British soldiers were enlisted to move mature trees into the garden to provide shelter for newly planted shrubs and flower beds. The sudden burst of gardening activity, in particular the earth moving, was a cause of grave suspicion to the governor Sir Hudson Lowe who bore the primary responsibility for preventing Napoleon escaping again, as he had done from Elba.



Top: Plan of Napoleon's one-hectare Longwood garden. The plan was used in the restoration of the garden.
photo Tim Gatehouse



Middle: Contemporary drawing showing the ordered paths and garden beds. From Jill, Duchess of Hamilton (1999), p 224.

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

Bottom: The Emperor gardening. The building behind him is an accurate depiction of Longwood House – the man wiping his brow does not seem to be enjoying the horticultural experience. From Jill, Duchess of Hamilton (1999) *Napoleon, the Empress and the artist*. Kangaroo Press, East Roseville, p 224.

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW





Left: Noverraz's garden and pond, Longwood House.

Right: Ali's garden and pergola, Longwood House.

photos Tim Gatehouse



Lowe failed to appreciate that the close restrictions under which Napoleon was placed were amongst the reasons for the creation of the garden in the first place.

The garden layout

From the gate lodge at the entrance to the estate, the drive runs for several hundred metres through a hamlet of modern houses to the entrance gates of the garden and the stone wall which surrounds it. Turfed paths then lead through the garden to the house. The garden lies to the north of the house and along two sides, where it can be viewed from the reception rooms and Napoleon's suite. Immediately in front of the house is a long lawn ending at a 'copper leaf' (?*Photinia x fraseri*) hedge and wall. Protruding from the main block of the house is a narrow wing containing the billiard and drawing rooms. On both sides of this wing are small geometrically planned gardens, named after Napoleon's valets, to whom he left the routine maintenance, while he continued to participate in the garden's further expansion.

To the west is first valet Louis-Joseph Marchand's garden. The main feature is an elongated diamond-shaped flowerbed within a rectangle bounded on two sides by the walls of the house. Sunken turfed paths define the beds. The corresponding garden on the east is named after second valet Ali (Louis Etienne Saint-Denis). The centrepiece here is an oval flowerbed. The eastern edge is bordered by a pergola with a curved roof frame, which separates

Ali's garden from that of the third valet Noverraz, whose garden is the largest of the three.

A cruciform pattern of paths with semicircular extensions at either end is centred on a circular fishpond. Flowerbeds border the paths and enclose lawns, the centres of each containing small circular flowerbeds. On the other side of the house a larger garden of similar design is laid out to the west of Marchand's garden.

Within the garden are several structures, some original, others re-created. The oldest is the bothy or gardener's shed, a small stone building which predates Napoleon's occupation. Nearby is the grotto, a mound smothered in vegetation containing a room decorated with neoclassical designs. Here Napoleon would retire to read or contemplate. In Noverraz's garden two buildings of oriental design reflect Europe's unfolding fascination with the East. At the highest point is the Chinese Pavilion, square in plan with diamond-shaped windows, upturned eaves and a pagoda-style roof. In a more sheltered position is the octagonal summerhouse, its slender columns also topped by a pagoda roof. Small pools at the junctions of the paths were once fed by a cascade running down the gentle slope of Noverraz's garden, although its effect must have been limited by the shortage of water at Longwood. Below the ornamental gardens were the orchard and vegetable gardens.

Planting the garden

Napoleon's interest in plants was scientific rather than aesthetic, and although he was delighted to



receive rare plants, his circumstances obliged him to also rely on more common species. Roses from Colonel Skelton's garden remained, and annuals were available on the island. Josephine had been an enthusiastic propagator of Australian plants, many of which found their way to St Helena. Eucalypts which had been introduced by governor Beatson as part of his acclimatisation experiments before Napoleon's arrival formed the backdrop to Longwood, and wattles also grew profusely. The seeds of everlasting daisies sent by Lady Holland to Madame Bertrand, whose husband was Marshall of Napoleon's diminished court, soon spread from Longwood to colonise much of the island. Many plants endemic to St Helena were carefully tended in the garden.

After Napoleon's death Longwood was rented to a farmer, who abandoned the garden and used the house for storage. By 1840 when the French delegation sent to repatriate Napoleon's body to France visited Longwood, it was derelict. After 1858, when the British government presented Longwood to France, basic repairs and maintenance were carried out, but it was not until 1987 that a major restoration project returned the house and garden to their appearance in 1821, the year of Napoleon's death.

The garden plan was restored, the sunken paths excavated and the garden buildings repaired or rebuilt. Lacking the intensive labour and water

necessary to sustain the more delicate plants and those endemic to the island, the garden is now dominated by drought-tolerant species of agapanthus, forget-me-nots and Cape iris, which have been growing on St Helena since the 18th century, as well as red-hot pokers, Japanese sunflowers and black olive shrubs. The rare plants endemic to St Helena can now only be enjoyed through the beautiful paintings of Marcel Martineau, the French consul on the island today.

The grotto at Longwood House.
photo Tim Gatehouse

Further reading

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Tim Gatehouse is a retired lawyer interested in the pre-gold rush history of Victoria, architectural history and the history of gardening. His articles on these subjects have appeared in various journals.





Ros Loftus

The garden at Riversdale, Goulburn

Irises in bloom
Riversdale, Goulburn.
photo Dawn Giles

Riversdale in Goulburn NSW is a state heritage-listed group of early colonial buildings around the original homestead. The main homestead is a colonial Georgian cottage notable (as the listing says) for its decorative qualities and fine craftsmanship and workmanship. Riversdale also has historic and aesthetic significance for its partly intact early colonial garden, which has survived periods of significant neglect and recent very severe drought. After Riversdale's sale to the National Trust in 1967 and restoration by National Trust volunteers, the garden's fortunes again fluctuated. National Trust volunteers have now turned a neglected wasteland in 2009 into a winner of the

Lilac City Festival's Best Heritage Garden Award, and Goulburn-Mulwaree Council Heritage Award for Garden Restoration in 2017. The garden today is a cornucopia of rich plantings, sweeping lawns, secret places, surprises, secluded pathways and living echoes of the past.

Irish ex-convict Matthew Healey (or Healy), entrepreneur, landowner, builder, horse-racer and pub owner, of the township of 'Goulburn Plains' built the stables (still standing) in about 1833, and is believed to have planted the nearby giant gleditsia.

Anne Richards built what is now the homestead of Riversdale as a coaching inn in about 1840, leaving her mark with the now fractured but still flourishing medlar. She may also have been

responsible for the avenue of English elms and a huge extant Aleppo pine in the front garden. At about that time a Chinese elm was planted just outside what is now the homestead's front gate, and two holm oaks in the parkland.

In the 1860s John Richards gave Riversdale its name. Richards once advertised 'a thousand dozen apples for sale'. The legacy of what must have been a huge orchard remains: a seemingly bent and broken but still fruitful espaliered apple. Three very elderly plum trees in the orchard area were possibly also plantings by Richards.

Edward Twynam

Edward Twynam (1832–1923), surveyor-general of NSW, rented Riversdale in 1872 and bought the property in 1875. A giant late 19th century Irish yew and weeping cypress were possibly among his plantings. A prolifically fruiting apple was planted at the end of World War I in 1918 to celebrate the safe return from active service of his son Ned and daughter nursing sister Alice Joan.

In 1922 the *Adelaide Register* reported:

Surveyor and asparagus

Mr. Twynam, retired Government Surveyor, of Riversdale, Goulburn, N.S.W., is the owner of the oldest asparagus bed in the Commonwealth. In 1873 Mr. Twynam leased the property and in 1875 purchased the estate, which was one of the first homes in this part of the State, and the garden around the old house was then in splendid order, an asparagus bed 30 or 40 ft. long and 15 ft. wide being a feature of the fine vegetable patch. At that time it was the only one outside of Sydney. During the war Miss Twynam sold large quantities of the vegetable, the proceeds going to the funds of the local Red Cross Society.

When the current team of gardeners took over some years ago at Riversdale, they found no evidence of this asparagus patch, but asparagus has been replanted in a close-by area with descendants of plants originally sent from Riversdale to Mary Cunningham (nee Twynam) at Tuggeranong Homestead in the ACT.

1967

Before and during the Twynam period of occupation much of the garden was under crops, vegetables and grazing animals, and the front garden was dwarfed by massive pines which have since disappeared. The last of the Twynams, Miss Twynam (Alice Joan), ran Riversdale as a boarding house. The *Canberra Times* reported in 1966 that the garden was very neglected and overgrown. When the National Trust purchased the property in 1967 it was decided to design and build a new garden in keeping with a large Australian property cottage garden ca 1900 to 1920.

Local garden designer Miss Jean Friend was commissioned to design it. Friend was an old girl of Frensham School for girls in the Southern Highlands, source of some of Riversdale's irises (irises are awarded for achievement at Frensham). Frensham's founder Miss Winifred West was a keen gardener and built a magnificent garden there. Many of her pupils who went on to design and build their own gardens, including 'Pejar', whose garden was created by Beatrice Bligh.

Miss Friend's design for Riversdale with its colourful borders was also influenced by English Arts and Crafts designer Gertrude Jekyll, and there are echoes of Edna Walling, Australian 20th century designer, famous for her garden 'windows'.



Edward Twynam and his daughter Edith beside the greenhouse at Riversdale, Goulburn, NSW.

Riversdale collection

Edward Twynam, Surveyor-General of NSW and owner of Riversdale, Goulburn ca 1880.

photographer unknown
B Moore *Lanyon Saga*
(1982), p 178, via
WikiCommons



Riversdale today.
photo Dawn Giles

Plantings

Most of Riversdale's heritage roses were planted either in the 1970s–1980s or more recently, using cuttings from original roses. Dr Huey, which was used widely as rootstock in the 1970s, has grown in some places from the original rootstock.

Six of the new apple trees in the 'new' orchard area are grafts from the old unnamed 1860s–70s espaliered apple on the right of the post-and-rail fence on the property's eastern side. The others are heritage apples donated from a TAFE grafting session held on the property. Brian Faulkner from TAFE donated a medlar grafted onto hawthorn stock, which stands beside the original rootstock of the 1840s medlar.

Riversdale's nursery serves to restock the garden and preserve old plants no longer available or not readily available in large commercial nurseries, and to raise revenue. Nursery stocks include the old-fashioned kolkwitzia, silene, *Arisaema vulgaris*, Persian lilac and bedding oxalis, a great favourite in colonial gardens and almost never seen now except in old gardens. There is no potted bamboo which, while true to colonial gardens, is still a dreadful nuisance and has a tendency to 'walk', as it did at Riversdale. It took some time to reduce in area. The nursery also has some holm oaks grown from acorns taken from its 1850s specimens — there are fewer than seven known examples of these trees in Goulburn, all planted about the same time.

Riversdale today

Today's award-winning garden at Riversdale is not exactly as it was left by Jean Friend, followed by Margaret Birkett and a team of gardeners who helped build it. The 'dreaded vinca', a lovely woodland ground cover in Europe, was left to grow uncontrolled in the full sun. It took

five months to remove the bulk of it, uncovering previously hidden paths.

The garden is maintained by a small number of volunteers, all with different techniques and ideas, who can choose their own 'plot' or contribute anywhere and everywhere. This ensures that, within certain agreed constraints, the garden has not had the chance to stagnate.

Riversdale is not a botanic or municipal garden and will never look like one. As a cottage garden, annuals such as poppies, scabiosa and larkspur go to seed, and weeding has to be done sparingly in some areas. Green waste is composted, pest management is as non-interventionist as possible, and blood and bone — which keeps the rabbits away for a period of time — is used as fertiliser.

Riversdale is also an off-campus classroom for TAFE diploma of horticulture students, and Work for the Dole participants cut the grass and help with the composting and irrigation. In 2018 the tanks are full for the first time for three years. Brick edging, in keeping with the Arts and Crafts/Edwardian theme, prevents erosion and retains moisture at the edges of the gardens, which are regularly composted to help retain moisture.

Good Old Riversdale

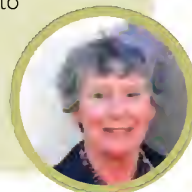
Riversdale's gardeners today use historical methods as much as possible, and plant ordinary plants now so out of favour. Mary Twynam (Cunningham) planted forget-me-nots — the gardeners today have planted swathes of them. Alice Joan loved her garden with its lilies and lavender, lilac and Fortune's yellow rose — in a letter to her sister Mary Cunningham at Tuggeranong Homestead ca 1897–98 after the family returned from living in Sydney, she says she will have lots of 'swaps'. Riversdale has lilies, lavender, a lilac, and a Fortune's double yellow rose on order. Riversdale's gardeners accept gifts and swaps of cuttings and plants from other gardeners. In fact we solicit them, because as there were no garden centres operating, this is how a cottage garden would have evolved.

At the turn of the 19th century, the family called the property 'Good Old Riversdale'. I like to think they would still say that, more than a century later.

Rare plants at Riversdale

Riversdale's rare plants and growers fair is on Sunday 4 November 2018, 10am to 3pm, with stalls, refreshments, talks and tours. Admission \$10, \$8 concession, National Trust members free; see www.nationaltrust.org.au/places/riversdale/

Ros Loftus has had a wonderfully colourful working life from teaching to parliamentary research, to radio journalism and antiques, finishing in London lobbying at the Palace of Westminster. However gardening remains her first love, and Riversdale's garden her final passion.





Sandra Pullman

Identifying plants in old photographs and paintings

Old paintings and photographs, even black and white ones, are important sources of information for the garden historian because they show what the garden landscape actually looked like – or the impression they created on an artist – at a particular time. In contrast, in the absence of images, the written word relies more heavily on imagination. Both photography and painting have their own difficulties when it comes to interpreting them later.

William Thomas Lewis's painting ca 1909 of 42A Bayview Crescent, Black Rock, Melbourne, is an impressionist view of what the artist felt and saw. Identifying the plants he has portrayed impressionistically is difficult because the

characteristics we normally use when we identify plants – form, height, branch structure, colour, flowerhead – exist as a blurred interpretation of what the artist sees. The result might not be what you or I see. There are still clues in this painting, but you need to know your indigenous plants.

A Black Rock childhood

Black Rock is a seaside suburb in the southeast of Melbourne. I grew up in the house at 42A Bayview Crescent in the 1960s, when swimming, fishing and sailing were the main activities for adults as well as kids. In the 19th century the bay was a popular destination for day trippers with their picnics and holiday-makers. Of course the landscape did not look anything like this in the 1960s. The house was a rambling weatherboard Victorian villa with a verandah running around about two-thirds of the house, some of it closed in. Two of the house's

Photograph of an original painting by William Thomas Lewis, ca 1909, of 42A Bayview Crescent, Black Rock (the author's childhood home). Our neighbour across the road at 37 Bayview Crescent took this photo. I do not know who owned the original picture or what happened to it, but Miss Annie Elizabeth Lewis lived two or three houses from us in the 1960s and the picture was probably with her.

photo George Scott, ca 1974–75



Top: Group of women on Black Rock beach, ca 1920 – ca 1930.

photographer unknown; State Library of Victoria

Middle: 'Black Rock'. Watercolour by Frederick George Green (1850–1927), ca 1890 – ca 1914. State Library of Victoria

Bottom: 'South West View from the roof of Mr. Lewis' house. 120 Bluff Road Black Rock.' Bluff Road is in the foreground, hidden by the heath.

Courtesy Sandringham and District Historical Society, George Scott Collection p 35 P2028



beautiful bay windows were most unusual – the sash windows went up like normal sash windows, but there were two wooden half-doors underneath that opened so you could step out onto the verandah. The kitchen cupboards and drawers were painted in harlequin style – a different colour for every cupboard and door, which I loved. The roof top deck was no longer there and strangely my parents were not keen on rebuilding, which I could not understand. Note the British Flag flying on top of the roof. Was this painting done before or after Federation? Most of the indigenous flora had disappeared except along the foreshore or several reserves around the area.

In the garden

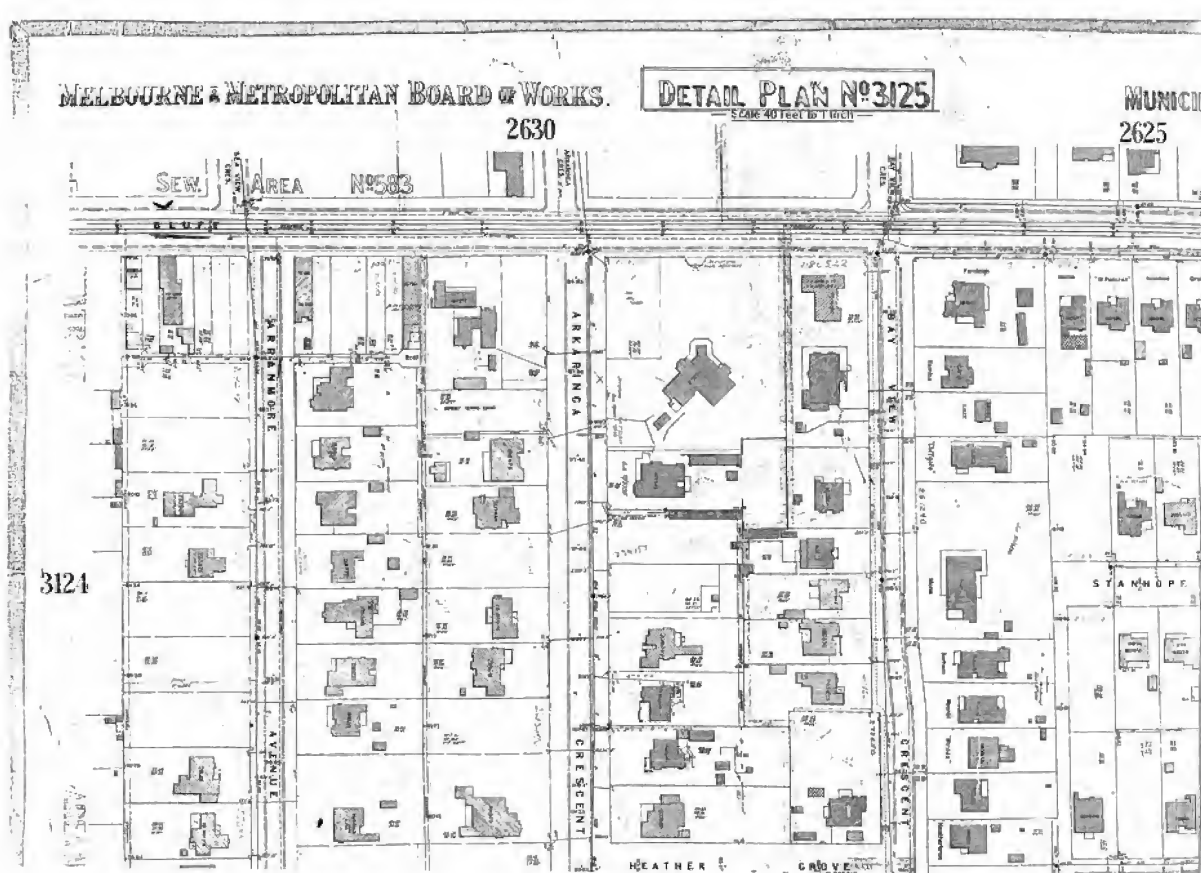
The garden was full of exotics, except for an established lilly pilli (*Acmena smithii*) in the front yard, and a remnant (?) tea tree (*Leptospermum* sp.) in the garden of our neighbours the Crisps (number 42). There were the usual old-fashioned plants: camellias, hydrangeas, a lemon tree, a crepe myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*), ivy, kikuyu grass, tradescantia (*Tradescantia fluminensis*, then called 'wandering jew'), fruit trees which succumbed to phytophthora, and of course red geraniums (*Pelargonium x hortorum*). There was also an excellent tree to climb on, the most magnificent flowering cherry (*Prunus*) with the best spring display of white flowers I have ever seen. All the original indigenous plants had long since disappeared. Sadly 42A was demolished in the 1970s – in its place now are three units, with not nearly so much history or character.

Uncovering a painting's history

I recently snaffled this picture from my mother and thought I would do some research to see if I could date the painting, find out who painted it and what the plants were.

The Land Titles Office proved to be frustrating, expensive and did not provide the information I wanted – the name of the original owner. Instead of seeing the entire file, I had to go through each transfer of ownership to get the parent volume and file number of the previous owner. This started to add up, and if there had been lots of owners could have meant several hundred dollars.

So I tried the rate books. Off I went to the Public Records Office; this proved less frustrating than it sometimes can be. The Public Records Office contains an important group of maps called the parish plans, which tell you what parish and county your house is located in. These details can



MMBW maps, Detail Plan No 3125, Municipality of Sandringham, Reticulation Area nos 399, 409.

Courtesy of Sandringham and District Historical Society

change several times in 200 years. The lot number of a block of land in the rate books does not necessarily co-ordinate with a house number, and it is highly likely that the street numbers may also have changed several times over a long period.

The 1852 surveyor's map of the Parish of Moorabbin, County of Bourke (Sandringham), 1852, by Assistant Surveyor Henry B Foot, noting the vegetation of the area, was fascinating. Foot had noted across where 42A was, '*heath with occasional patch of gum scrub*', an excellent helpful hint for identifying the plants (see *View from the roof of Mr. Lewis' house*).

MMBW maps

The next group of maps I used were the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) maps which are online at the Public Records Office and at the State Library of Victoria. There are three types of plans which are linked to each other:

1. main grid system of metropolitan Melbourne
2. index plans which show the municipalities
3. detailed plans which identify the street blocks.'

The maps were created to identify each suburb's infrastructure after 1891 as the new waterborne

sewerage system was being rolled out across Melbourne. They are a wonderful source of information because they show the outline of the house, sheds, fences, roads, tram and train lines and sometimes garden features including shape of the garden beds, tennis courts, etc. Neither the Public Records Office nor the State Library of Victoria has a complete set of MMBW maps. You may need to check whether the University of Melbourne has a copy of the plan you want, or visit your local historical society, as I had to for MMBW Detail Plan 3125.

This showed that by 1925 Bayview Crescent and the surrounding area had been subdivided and built on, so obviously the painting was done before 1925. It also showed that between 42A and Bluff Road, there was another house that I never knew of.

Another excellent resource of information for me was the local Sandringham and District Historical Society. In their photo albums I was able to find further clues, including a photograph of the surrounding vegetation taken from the roof top deck with the caption '*View from the roof of Mr. Lewis' house 120 Bluff Road, Black Rock, now occupied by units 1,2,3 at 42A Bayview Crescent*'. The catalogue entry recorded the date as ca 1910. At this point I knew the owner was Mr William Thomas Lewis.



'Black Rock', 1920,
by Carl Reinhold
Hartmann
(1889–1972).
State Library of Victoria

It is also useful to know that municipal libraries have free editions of the family history database Ancestry.

More discoveries

The Victorian Electoral Rolls cemented all this information together, as they tracked Lewis's occupation and address from 1909 to 1942. I realise that the entry for William Thomas Lewis at 120 Bluff Road in 1909 was same as 34 Bayview Crescent, Black Rock, in 1942, which became 42 Bayview Crescent in 1954 and eventually by the 1960s had become 42A Bayview Crescent, Black Rock. I also discovered our house's name 'Dolguan'.² I was pretty chuffed, I had found what I was looking for!

Identifying the plants

I had some ideas what I thought the plants might be, but I was mostly wrong. Eventually I emailed the Beaumaris Conservation Society who were extremely helpful, forwarding my inquiry onto several other members of society including another resident of Bayview Crescent Mrs Valerie Tarrant, whom I knew. Mrs Tarrant knew Mr Lewis's daughter Annie in the early 1960s.

The society's members came up with the following list of plants:

Background

Eucalyptus pryoriana but form is wrong.

Middle ground

(left) Black she-oak (*Allocasuarina littoralis*) (has upright form like this specimen). Other she-oaks (*Casuarina* spp.) have messier branchings.

White tree next to *Allocasuarina littoralis* could be coastal tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*), but they do not flower as profusely as in picture. Perhaps it is sweet bursaria?

Lower white plants might be wedding bush (*Ricinocarpus pinifolius*); has profuse white flowers as does heath tea tree (*Leptospermum myrsinoides* or *L. continentale*).

Foreground

Purple/orange patch in picture

The foreground is a perfect demonstration of the difficulty of using an impressionist painting to identify plants. Is the purple swathe one species or many? After speaking to several native plant experts, I concluded that it could be one or a mixture of the following species with blue/purple flowers: flax lily (*Dianella*), purple flag (*Patersonia occidentalis*), love creeper (*Comesperma volubile*), chocolate lily (*Dichopogon strictus*) or the very pretty Australian bluebell (*Wahlenbergia stricta* or *W. capillaris*).

The orange area could represent masses of sword-sedge (*Lepidosperma*) combined with some tussock grasses which could be soft spear-grass (*Stipa mollis*) and grey tussock grass (*Poa sieberiana*) or spiny-head mat-rush (*Lomandra*) which can look like sword-sedge as somewhat coppery in appearance.

Through researching when plants flower, you are able to determine the season in which a photograph or painting might have been made. In this case I think it was painted in spring.

I feel this photograph of the original painting (which is now lost) is an important record of what 42A Bayview Crescent once looked like. Old paintings and photographs like these are important because they can be used to help local conservation groups and councils when they are trying to revegetate local areas.

- 1 There are also the field books in which the surveyor has drawn detailed information of individual properties. The detailed plans often will reference which field books to look at. These are not online, they are ordered and viewed at the Public Records Office.
- 2 There is a Dolguan House in Wales at Milford Road, Newtown, Powys. Perhaps William Thomas Lewis came from Wales.

Sandra Pullman is currently completing a Master of Architecture (Research) at Deakin University on Ina Higgins, an early 20th century Burnley Horticultural College graduate.





Anne Vale

FOR THE BOOKSHELF

Victoria's diversity of National Trust gardens

Australia's garden history has been recounted in many ways – through the achievements of influential people, the history of significant elements, and the focus on particular eras. *Gardens of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)* takes the reader on a tour of Australia's garden history through the lens of an organisation dedicated to saving and showcasing a diversity of gardens throughout Victoria.

Researching the history of a garden can unearth a rich and often complex narrative. The archives of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) ('the Trust') reveal a treasure chest of historic documents and images. Some of the original garden designs associated with Trust properties have disappeared but they are not forgotten. Many bear witness to the past through remnant vegetation, garden structures, extant trees, or foundations of garden beds and paths. Some Trust gardens have been rejuvenated or recreated in a style that denotes a particular period of time.

The story of the Trust gardens is the story of how some of our towns and cities were established. Some of them were gardens made when South Yarra was 'so far from town that first inhabitants felt lonely and cut off from society'. There are gardens that were established in remote country Victoria where today there are wall to wall housing developments.

The Melbourne garden treasures of Como and Rippon Lea are familiar landmarks to many, much loved for their botanical riches and their idyllic settings. Como was built in 1847 on South Yarra hill overlooking the Yarra River. It was on a 54.5 acre site purchased in the first land sales held south of the Yarra. Between 1854 and 1864, the grounds were professionally landscaped in the Picturesque style by new immigrant, landscape designer William Sangster (1831–1910).

The garden at Rippon Lea Estate, jewel in the crown of Trust gardens in Victoria, is the legacy of Sir Frederick Thomas Sargood (1834–1903). The original design is credited to Edward La Trobe Bateman (1816–1897).

Barwon Grange,
early summer 2017.
photo Anne Vale

In 1885 the garden was extensively re-landscaped by the now eminent William Sangster. It was added to the National Heritage list in 2006 and is the last of the great privately owned 19th century suburban estates to survive largely intact.

The Trust's early colonial settlement gardens include Mott's Cottage in Port Fairy, La Trobe's Cottage in Melbourne, Gulf Station in the Yarra Ranges, and The Briars and McCrae Homestead on the Mornington Peninsula. Some of these properties have recreations of typical early colonial settlement gardens which enhance the surviving structures and collectively tell the story of how people lived in the 1800s.

The 1850s rural villa The Heights in Aphrasia Street, Newtown, is one of the oldest private gardens in Geelong, established by colonial settler Charles Ibbotson (1813–1883). Some surviving original trees are complemented by later garden styles. In the same period, nearby merchant Jonathan Porter O'Brien and his wife Ann bought a block of land stretching down to the river in Newtown. They built a substantial brick Gothic Revival villa ('Barwon Grange') and created a lovely garden of trees and shrubs including a distinctive fountain near the house.

Barwon Park at Winchelsea was perhaps the most notable homestead designed by architects Davidson and Henderson. It was built between 1869 and 1871 for prominent Western District squatter Thomas Austin (1815–71) and his wife Elizabeth. A grand ball on 30 June 1871

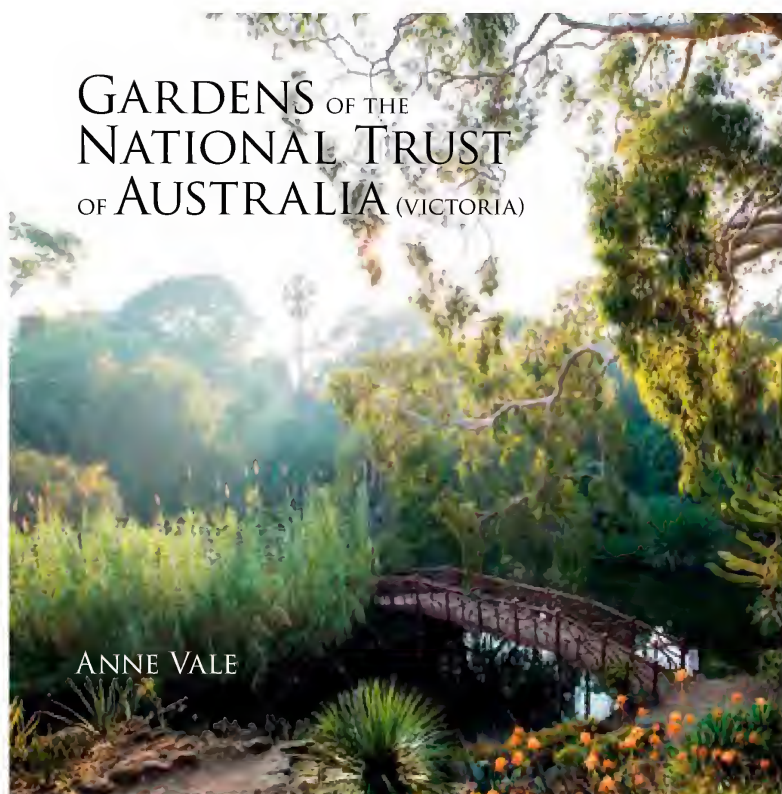
celebrated the building's completion but Thomas died five months later, causing any grand plans to be postponed. A much simpler garden eventuated that included a carriage circle, trees and a parterre. As with all the Trust properties, volunteers have been essential in creating and maintained an appropriate landscape around the restored mansion. Landscape architect Andrew Laidlaw designed a contemporary parterre, on the footprint of the original, which was planted out by Trust staff and volunteers.

Grand mansions built during Melbourne's 19th century boom years had gardens of extraordinary size and complexity. Labassa had just such a garden attached to the lavishly decorated 19th century mansion. The original property encompassed the entire northeast corner of Balaclava and Orrong Roads, Caulfield. The property was subsequently sold off into various parcels of land. The house fell into disrepair and the garden all but disappeared. However, today the substantially restored mansion is surrounded by a revitalised garden designed by landscape architect Elizabeth Peck.

Two gardens created in the 20th century were Mooramong at Skipton and Mulberry Hill at Baxter. The latter, a lovely example of a 'between the wars' 20th century country home, was created by Joan Lindsay (who wrote *Picnic at Hanging Rock*) and her husband the painter Daryl Lindsay. Daryl was responsible for remodelling the existing cottage and designing a larger home. Joan and Daryl, both novice gardeners, had ideas of an English style garden but these were soon abandoned for a style suited to the climate and soil. One extraordinary survivor within the walled garden at the rear of the house is the mulberry tree (*Morus nigra*). Joan described it in 1925 as 'the enormous mulberry tree spreading its leafless branches over the yard'. Ninety-plus years later, it may be supported by props and chains but it is still there, creating shade and providing fruit.

Extract from Anne Vale (2018) *Gardens of the National Trust of Australia* (Victoria) National Trust of Australia (Victoria) available at <https://shop.nationaltrust.org.au/products/gardens-of-the-national-trust-of-australia-victoria-by-anne-vale>.

Dr Anne Vale is an AGHS member, garden historian, public speaker and garden photographer. Her illustrated talks are primarily garden and garden history related. She is the author of *Influential Australian garden people: their stories* (2016) and *Exceptional Australian garden makers* (2013).



A personal look at The language of flowers

On a recent study tour of heritage places in the USA, my wife and I visited our daughter who lives and works in New York. After wasting one morning in my hotel room trying to finish a report for a client back home, I decided to make the most of what was left of the short early-December day and headed uptown to pay homage at one of my favourite architectural landmarks, the Flatiron Building. After a delicious lunch at Eataly, one of a worldwide chain of Italian delis-come-food halls, which included a spirited discussion with two feisty New York women about the current parlous state of US politics, I duly visited the Flatiron, which was being celebrated in a month-long festival including a pop-up park, food trucks and a sculptural installation across the road. Fortified gastronomically and architecturally, I headed back down Broadway and, against my better judgement, entered that 3-storey mecca for booklovers, Strandbooks.

After finding two very heavy but fine second-hand tomes by the famous architectural photographer Julius Shulman, I gathered up several other books on local history and landscape as well as two tote bags. On my way to the checkout at Strandbooks, I spied a colourful little paperback with a handwritten sign in front advising that it was a New York Times bestseller and a special staff pick. I added it to my pile and paid the surprisingly low total at the cash register, knowing this would be eclipsed a few days later when my daughter and I would trudge to the post office on Canal Street with a suitcase full of books and pamphlets to be sent back home at vast expense.

Buying books on overseas trips is very dangerous and inevitably ends in tears and expensive last-minute trips to post offices. In the last decade I swear I have single-handedly saved the Royal Mail, US Postal Service and the Italian equivalent from economic disaster. I do buy books in Australia, lots of books, and online, lots of books, but there is something special about finding a book, often unexpectedly, in a faraway place.



As with souvenirs bought on overseas trips, these books remind you of your travels and special places you have visited.

The little paperback I picked up at Strandbooks was *The language of flowers* (Ballantine Books, New York, 2012), a first novel by American author Vanessa Diffenbaugh. It is the story of Victoria, abandoned at birth and passed from pillar to post, from one foster family and group home to another, becoming a rebellious misanthrope by the age of nine, shunning friendships and mistrusting everyone including Meredith, her long-suffering but persistent case worker. Meredith finally places her with Elizabeth, who has inherited a vineyard on the outskirts of San Francisco but for the past fifteen years has not spoken to her sister who was

left the adjacent flower farm. Elizabeth introduces the young Victoria to the wonders of plants and their meanings, unlocking the girl's imagination and starting her on a course that will change her life and those with whom she intersects forever. The author is herself a foster parent and this shows through in her insightful treatment of the subject — she obviously has first-hand knowledge of the emotional and physical damage done to long-term victims of the child welfare system.

Victoria's story oscillates between her time spent with Elizabeth, discovering all sorts of new things and learning to trust another human being, and her later period as a late teenager, finally freed from the welfare system and fending for herself in the world. With her by now encyclopaedic knowledge of plants and their meanings, Victoria finds a part-time job as a florist's assistant and the opportunity to help others through the plants she chooses for them. However, 'an unexpected encounter with a mysterious stranger has her questioning what's been missing in her life. And when she's forced to confront a painful secret from her past, she must decide whether it's worth risking everything for a second chance at happiness'.

After reading *The language of flowers* you may view your garden very differently and the next time you're choosing flowers to send to a loved one (or a not-so loved one) you may think more carefully about your choice of blooms. Victoria finds that some flowers have more than one meaning and these meanings may be diametrically opposite. (In his wonderful field guide to cemetery symbolism and iconography *Stories in stone* (Gibbs Smith, Layton, Utah, 2004), Douglas Keister cites the example of that 'funerarily schizophrenic' flower Narcissus. Named after the youth Narcissus in Greek mythology, this flower was traditionally associated with negative attributes such as vanity and self-love. Keister argues that Christians, not wanting to waste a beautiful flower, 'cleverly turned the Narcissus story around ... and gave it the attributes of triumph of divine love and sacrifice over vanity, selfishness, and death'.)

If, like me, you find Vanessa Diffenbaugh's little book moving and beautifully written, you will want to delve into the works of the Victorian romantic poets and the many other little books on the language of flowers. Female readers who have endured the trauma of natural childbirth may squirm at the vivid description of Victoria's labour, but most readers will also be uplifted by the knowledge that even those with

severe attachment disorder can ultimately find forgiveness, love and fulfilment, with the help of the power of flowers.

The author provides a detailed note with a list of sources, acknowledgments, her own reader's guide to the language of flowers brought up-to-date, an interview with Kate Penn, editor-in-chief of *Floral Management Magazine*, published by the Society of American Florists, a review by Paula McLain, the *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Paris wife*, and some questions and topics for discussion.

And my suggested further reading

Henrietta Dumont (1851) *The floral offering: a token of affection and esteem; comprising the language and poetry of flowers*. H C Peck and Theo. Bliss, Philadelphia, accessible at https://ia801406.us.archive.org/20/items/gb2bCdaZ7KvDsC/gb2bCdaZ7KvDsC_text.pdf.

Sarah C Edgerton (1850) *The flower vase: containing the language of flowers and their poetic sentiments*. Joshua Merrill, Lowell, GW Fisher, Rochester NY, accessible with subscription at <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=njp.32101068142429;view=1up;seq=11>.

Kate Greenaway (1884) *Language of flowers*. George Routledge and Sons, London, accessible at <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/31591>.

James D McCabe (ca 1866) *The language and sentiment of flowers*. Frederick Warne and Co, London, accessible at <https://ia902300.us.archive.org/4/items/languagesentimen00londrich/languagesentimen00londrich.pdf>.

Theodore F Niehaus and Charles L Ripper (1998) *A field guide to Pacific states wildflowers: Washington, Oregon, California and adjacent areas* (Peterson Field Guides), 2nd edition. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston.

Catharine H Waterman (1857) *Flora's lexicon: an interpretation of the language and sentiment of flowers: with an outline of botany: and a poetical introduction*. Phillips, Sampson and Co, Boston, accessible at <https://ia800208.us.archive.org/22/items/cu31924074089206/cu31924074089206.pdf>.

Heritage consultant **Chris Betteridge** is qualified in botany, museum studies and heritage conservation, and has more than 30 years' experience in the investigation, assessment, management and interpretation of the natural and cultural environment. He has lectured and published widely on the conservation of cultural landscapes including historic gardens, parks and cemeteries.





AGHS's new Patron, Hon Professor Tim Entwisle. photo Janusz Molinski

New Patron for AGHS

Professor Tim Entwisle has accepted the Australian Garden History Society's invitation to become Patron of the Society. We are delighted to welcome him as Patron.

Tim Entwisle is a scientist, scientific communicator and botanic gardens director. He is currently president of the International Association of Botanic Gardens and chair of the Council of Heads of Australian Botanic Gardens.

He was appointed director and chief executive of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria in March 2013, following two years in a senior role at Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and eight years as executive director of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust in Sydney. Tim writes for a variety of science, nature and garden magazines and maintains an active social media profile (including his popular 'Talkingplants' blog). He contributes regularly to radio, including ABC RN *Blueprint for Living*, and has hosted *Talking Plants* and co-hosted *In Season*.

Tim is a current member of the Society. He is looking forward to a closer association and to assisting us in any way that he can. We are honoured to have him.

AGHS 39th Annual General Meeting

The Australian Garden History Society's 39th Annual General Meeting will be held at **8.25am on Saturday 27 October 2018 at the Mittagong RSL** venue for the 2018 annual conference of the Society.

The Mittagong RSL is located at the corner of the Hume Hwy and Bessemer St, Mittagong NSW 2575.

Copies of the 2017/18 Annual Report will be available at the meeting and through the website. If you would like a copy sent to you, please contact the office.

Farewell to Marian Brookes

The Australian Garden History Society has lost a dear friend and supporter in Marian Brookes who passed away on 15 May 2018.

Marian, an anaesthetist and psychiatrist, was a foundation member of the AGHS and Victorian Chair in the late 1980s into the 1990s. Her love of gardens and plants was lifelong, dating from childhood holidays spent with her extended family at Summerhome in Moonah, Tasmania, whose garden dates from 1845 and is still surviving.

She was on the first Board of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, and for many years on the Maud Gibson Trust which supports the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. She and her late husband, John, were very strong supporters of the AGHS and regular attendees of conferences and branch activities.

Always a very keen plantswoman and gardener, Marian continued to propagate special treasures and garden with help from her daughter Margaret until the end of her life. An avid reader, Marian was always up to date with the latest plant and garden books. Marian was always a keen bidder at the annual plant auctions of the Ornamental Plant Conservation Association of Australia (now the Garden Plant Conservation Association of Australia) and I'm certain was the first bidder to top \$100 when she was determined to buy a pot of *Corydalis flexuosa*.

Based on Helen Page's article in the AGHS Victorian branch newsletter for winter 2018.



Dialogue

National Trust Heritage Awards open soon for 2019

The National Trust Heritage Awards are the signature event of the Australian Heritage Festival and are now in their 24th year of recognising heritage projects. The Australian Heritage Festival is supported through funding from the Australian Government's National Trusts Partnership Program and the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.

Among the 2018 winners awarded in May was a cultural landscape assessment by AGHS's Colleen Morris and others in the Conservation – Landscape category (see *Australian Garden History* vol 30 no 1, July 2018). The awards attract entries from councils, community groups, corporations and individuals, working on everything from education and research to restoration of objects, revitalisation, architectural reinvigoration, documentaries, regeneration of the environment and advocacy campaigns. The 2019 awards open for entries in January 2019 and will be presented on 10 May 2019.

For details see <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/heritage-awards-nsw-2018/>

Funding for new national herbarium of NSW

In June 2018 the NSW Government announced \$60 m funding to construct a new national herbarium of NSW at the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan as part of a new Centre of Innovation in Plant Sciences. The National Herbarium of NSW holds more than 1.4 million plant specimens, among which are specimens collected by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander on Joseph Cook's 1770 voyage. It will join the existing Australian Plant Bank at Mt Annan, forming the new centre. Construction will take four years and is scheduled to start in 2019.

The current herbarium building at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney will be refurbished as a science, education discovery and engagement centre.

Exhibitions & Courses

The Art of Botanical Illustration 2018

Domain House, Dallas Brooks Drive,
Melbourne (off Birdwood Avenue,
150 m east of the Shrine of Remembrance)

13 – 28 October 2018
(10 am to 4 pm daily)

14th Biennial Botanical Art Exhibition and Sale, held by the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, with some 150 paintings from local, interstate and overseas artists.

Entry by gold coin donation.

Papaver somniferum, Vicki Philipson.



Topiary Craft masterclass

Mount Lofty Botanic Garden
nursery, Lampert Road,
South Australia

Sunday 4 November 2018
(9 am to 12 noon or 1.30 to 4.30 pm)

\$85 (+ booking fee if booked online)
via Eventbrite

Masterclass on the art of topiary, covering its history and practical aspects of how to grow, train and maintain a topiary collection. Plants worked on in class can be taken home.



'Tea-pot Cottage', [corner of] Cressy Rd and Tate St, Camperdown Victoria, 1979.

photo John T Collins; JT Collins Collection, La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria.

HOLD: To hold still. To contain. To hold dear.

Santos Museum of Economic Botany,
Adelaide Botanic Garden, North Tce,
Adelaide until 9 December 2018
(10 am to 4 pm daily)

Through glass, botanical collections the world over are propagated, perpetuated, transported, studied, preserved, presented and represented. Inspired by glasshouses and by these kinds of glass paraphernalia, glass artists Jess Dare and Amanda Dziedzic explore the relationship between glass and nature. The exhibition's glass objects, while representing nature, also explore ideas of memory and personal histories.

Close to Nature: May Gibbs and Australian Botanical Art

Carrick Hill, 46 Carrick Hill Drive,
Springfield, Adelaide,
Wednesday – Sunday

10 am to 4 pm until 25 November 2018

See exhibition co-curator Anna Jug's article in this issue, p 12.

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Australian Garden History welcomes contributions of any length up to 1200 words. Prospective contributors are strongly advised to contact the editor before submitting text or images.

The views expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the Australian Garden History Society.

Getting to know them

stories from the AGHS oral history collection

Phyl Simons

In a 2010 interview in *Australian Garden History* (vol 21 no 3), AGHS's late Patron Sue Ebury, Countess of Wilton, recalled the 1980 meeting in Melbourne at which it was decided to form the Society. At the meeting were a group of 'now well known figures' concerned about the conservation of Australia's gardening and landscape heritage and the wider environment. Among them were 'James Broadbent, Peter Watts, Oline Richards, and Phyl Simons (the four people surveying historic gardens for the Australian Heritage Commission in NSW, Victoria, Western Australia, and Tasmania)'.

Phyl Frazer Simons wrote *Historic Tasmanian gardens* (Mulini Press, Canberra, 1987). Jane Holth interviewed her for the Society's oral history collection on 26 September 2002 in North Carlton.

Jane Holth Now your early influences?

Phyl Simons My great grandparents – Joseph Harris was the first nurseryman [one of] in Melbourne and he had a place down at 'Marina' at Mornington with a lovely garden and a teahouse that he'd imported from Japan and he was growing some Japanese trees and plants there... He was very interested in the way native plants could be used in commerce and he wrote an essay on that, that's in the Mitchell Library somewhere. And he lived to a great age — very influential, was on boards of botanical gardens and this sort of thing, donated trees and so forth, but he was an influence because I've inherited some of his books, he used to have a big correspondence overseas with nurseries over there...

Dad let me have a garden behind the garage and, this is when I was about ten, and I laid it out in scallop beds, you know, it wasn't very original, and we made a little path of bricks — I got the neighbours to help — little brick path by the apple tree and we planted little bush roses.



Phyl Simons, a founding member of AGHS. photographer unknown

Above: The grounds of Woolmers at Longford, Tasmania, site of the picnic Phyl describes. photo Nigel Bills, Archives Office of Tasmania



JH Doing landscape design was a very natural thing for you to do, wasn't it?

Phyl Simons I love the shape of things and the colour of them and why they are like they are, so I did architecture at first, and I taught design in that.

JH Following along on the history of the Society – why do you think the Society was formed?

Phyl Simons Well it was formed because I suggested it, actually ... I was ... the only landscape architect working in Tasmania. Someone was picked from each state to do the National Trust history of the gardens in their state. That's how it all started. Oline Richards was in WA, and Peter Watts, who's a lovely fellow, was in Victoria, he wrote that wonderful book. I was in Tasmania ... Miranda Nunn ... and I ... put on a little lunch, a picnic lunch, at Woolmers. ... After that lunch ... I rang up Peter and I said, 'Why don't we have a garden history society like they have in England?' Now it sounds as though I'm boasting but actually Peter told this story at the [AGHS] meeting last year.

JH So what have your aims been, in your life as a landscape designer?

Phyl Simons I feel in a way that design's artificial to some extent, there are fashions in design ... but the natural world is part of the world we live in — a very precious part.



The Australian Garden History Society promotes awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes through engagement, research, advocacy and activities.